

## BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Serial No. 10/770.928  
60,130-2033 (01MRA0197)

### IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior listings.

#### Listing of Claims:

1.-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) An axle assembly comprising:

a tubular member having an outer wall and an interior cavity, an exterior surface of said outer wall including defining a hydroformed first interlocking feature; and

an axle component mounting member arranged on said exterior surface, said axle component mounting member including a second interlocking feature coacting with said hydroformed first interlocking feature to affix said axle component mounting member and tubular member to one another.

11. (Previously Amended) The axle assembly according to claim 10, wherein said axle component mounting member is a bearing shoulder sleeve.

12. (Previously Amended) The axle assembly according to claim 10, wherein said axle component mounting member is a brake flange.

13. (Previously Amended) The axle assembly according to claim 10, further including a material disposed between said exterior surface and said axle component mounting member.

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14. (Currently Amended) The axle assembly according to claim 10, wherein said hydroformed first interlocking features and said second interlocking feature include complimentary splines.

15. (Currently Amended) The axle assembly according to claim 10, wherein said second interlocking feature is a hole and said hydroformed first interlocking feature is a hydroformed protrusion extending into said hole.

16. (Previously Presented) The axle assembly according to claim 10, wherein said axle component mounting member includes a generally convex annular surface in engagement with said exterior surface.

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17. (Previously Presented) The axle assembly according to claim 10, wherein said outer wall is continuous and extends beyond said axle component mounting member.

18. (Currently Amended) The axle assembly according to claim 10, wherein said tubular member extends along an axis, said axle component mounting member having an inner bore received on said exterior surface, said inner bore being non-cylindrical, about said axis, and a portion of said exterior surface receiving said axle component mounting member also being non-cylindrical about said axis.

19. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 10, wherein said hydroformed first interlocking feature includes a curved surface that faces radially outward relative to said tubular member.

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20. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 15, wherein said hydroformed protrusion includes a convex surface.

21. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 10 wherein said hydroformed first interlocking feature comprises a portion of said outer wall that is deformed into engagement with said second interlocking feature.

22. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 21 wherein said outer wall is deformed into engagement with said second interlocking feature in response to pressurization of said interior cavity.

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23. (New) An axle assembly comprising:

a tubular member having an outer wall defining an interior cavity and wherein an exterior surface of said outer wall includes a hydroformed portion; and

an axle component mounting member arranged on said exterior surface, said axle component mounting member including an engagement portion coacting with said hydroformed portion to affix said axle component mounting member and tubular member to one another.

24. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 23 wherein said hydroformed portion comprises an outer wall portion that is deformed into engagement with said engagement portion.

25. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 24 wherein said outer wall portion is deformed into engagement with said engagement portion in response to pressurization of said interior cavity.

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26. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 24 wherein said hydroformed portion includes at least one protrusion and said engagement portion includes at least one recess, said at least one protrusion extending into said at least one recess to interlock said tubular member and said axle component mounting member together.

27. (New) The axle assembly as recited in claim 24 wherein said hydroformed portion includes first splined surface and said engagement portion includes a second splined surface cooperating with said first splined surface to interlock said tubular member and said axle component mounting member together.